



Department of State

TELEGRAM

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EXPIRE
2 P.M. 0931

INFO OCT-01 ARA-11 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01
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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9267

USINT HAVANA IMMEDIATE

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

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USNMR SHAPE BE

CINCUSAFAE RAMSTEIN AB GE

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TAGS: PEPR, CU, UR

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SUBJECT: INITIAL SOVIET PRESS COMMENT ON MIG-23
DEPLOYMENT IN CUBA

1. PRAVDA NOVEMBER 18 CARRIES INITIAL SOVIET PRESS COMMENT ON EVANS AND NOVAK COLUMN REPORTING DEPLOYMENT OF MIG-23 AIRCRAFT TO CUBA. SIX-PARAGRAPH ARTICLE APPEARS IN ROUTINE FORMAT ON INTERNATIONAL PAGE UNDER TITL "THEY ARE BLOWING SOAP BUBBLES," AND IS AUTHORED BY PSEUDONYMOUS A. PETROV. ASSUME FULL FBIS TRANSLATION AVAILABLE TO ADDRESSEES.
2. ACCORDING TO PETROV, THE WASHINGTON POST COLUMN REPORTS THAT MIG-23 AIRPLANES HAVE APPEARED IN CUBA AND MAINTAINS THAT THIS APPARENTLY CONTRADICTS THE SOVIET-AMERICAN UNDERSTANDING OF 1962. SUCH ASSERTIONS, PETROV WRITES, FROM BEGINNING TO END ARE "GROUNDOLESS AND PROVOCATIVE".
3. AFTER IMPUGNING MOTIVATION OF EVANS AND NOVAK, ARTICLE STATES THAT "ACCORDING TO THEIR BASIC CHARACTERISTICS, THE AIRCRAFT (ABOUT WHICH EVANS AND NOVAK WRITE) IS OF THE SAME TYPE WHICH HAVE BEEN AND ARE IN CUBA, ARE AND REMAIN ESSENTIAL FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE LEGAL INTERESTS OF THIS SOVEREIGN STATE". NO QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE SOVIET-AMERICAN AGREEMENT OF 1962 THEREFORE ARISE. THEY CANNOT ARISE, THE ARTICLE CONTINUES, BECAUSE THE SOVIET UNION "HAS FIRMLY ADHERED AND ADHERES TO ITS PART OF THE UNDERSTANDING," PROCEEDING FROM THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE U.S. WILL DO LIKEWISE. PRAVDA ARTICLE NOTES THAT THE CONSTRUCTIVE POSITION OF CUBA IS ALSO WELL KNOWN IN THIS REGARD.

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4. EVANS AND NOVAK COLUMN IS SAID TO BE "INSPIRED" BY PERSONS FROM THE RANKS OF THOSE OPPOSED TO EQUAL AND MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS SOVIET-AMERICAN COOPERATION. COLUMN IS DESIGNED, ACCORDING TO ARTICLE, TO EVOKE A NEW WAVE OF SUSPICION TOWARDS THE USSR AT A TIME WHEN THE STRATEGIC ARMS NEGOTIATIONS HAVE ENTERED THEIR "DECISIVE PHASE". THE PRAVDA ARTICLE WINDS UP BY DECLARING THERE IS ONLY ONE CONCLUSION (ABOUT THIS MATTER) WHICH CORRESPONDS TO "THE REALITIES": NAMELY, THAT COMMON SENSE AND THE INTERESTS OF THE NATIONS

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OUGHT TO HAVE PRIORITY OVER THE "MERCENARY INTERESTS
OF THE MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX AND THOSE CIRCLES
WHICH EVANS, NOVAK AND THEIR KIND SERVE".

5. COMMENT: AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED

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6. WHILE THE PRAVDA ARTICLE, MOSCOW'S FIRST PUBLIC
COMMENT ON THE ISSUE

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